Gahanna Quarterly Update

North Hamilton Road Widening Project Update

Nearly 20 years in the making, work has finally begun on the Hamilton Road Central Widening and Improvement Project.

A collaboration between the City of Gahanna and Franklin County, the project is designed to reduce congestion between Carpenter Road and US-62. The widening will modify North Hamilton Rd. from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction with a center left turn lane. The project also includes two roundabouts: one at the Clark State intersection and another at the Northeast School's north driveway. In addition, a 10-foot wide multi-use path

Roundabout at Clark State Rd.
(Artist's Rendering)

will be constructed on the west side of Hamilton Rd. A new sidewalk will be constructed on the east side of Hamilton Rd.

According to City Engineer Robert Priestas, this section of Hamilton Rd. carries more than 33,000 vehicles daily. "In 1996, Gahanna and Franklin County partnered on a massive project to improve the safety and reliability of Hamilton Road from I-270 to Morse Rd. Due to the cost, magnitude and impact of this plan, it was to be implemented in three phases. The first two phases have been completed, and this is the last phase."

The construction of this last phase was made possible by more than 14 million dollars in federal grant money, another 1.2 million from the Ohio Public Works Commission and cost sharing and partnership with Franklin County.

The project is expected to span three construction seasons, beginning this summer and ending in the fall of 2017. Two-way traffic will be maintained on Hamilton Rd. except for a period of approximately 21 days during replacement of a culvert near US-62. Closures of Clark State Rd. and Carpenter Rd. will occur as necessary. Signed detour routes will be in place during each closure.
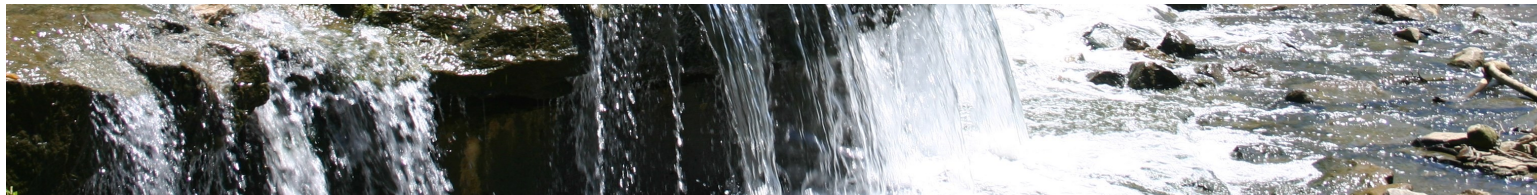

Roundabout at Northeast School
(Artist's Rendering)

"Improving our roadway network to provide a safe and reliable thoroughfare system is a top priority for the City of Gahanna," says Priestas. "We realize that the next two years will have some challenges, but long-term, the benefits to the community will far outweigh bumps in the road today. It is our mission to maintain and improve the quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors well into the future."

For updates regarding this project, please visit the City of Gahanna's website at www.gahanna.gov.
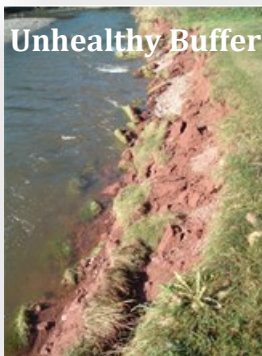
Healthy Streams

While there are many ways to promote stream stewardship, three easy steps can positively impact residential communities: 1) establish streamside buffers, 2) refrain from dumping yard waste into storm sewers or directly into waterways, and 3) use fertilizers and pesticides minimally on lawns.

The City of Gahanna has nearly 58.6 miles of streams and creeks within the City limits. The four largest are the Big Walnut Creek, Rocky Fork Creek, Sycamore Run and McKenna Creek. These creeks are part of the storm water collection system that transports the storm runoff, ultimately to the Scioto River. The health of these streams is essential to retain high water quality, reduce creek erosion, and maintain a flourishing aquatic habitat.

Healthy streams are vital to human and environmental health. Over time, population growth and industrialization greatly impacted stream health and the buffers that used to protect them. Stream buffers are layers of vegetation that protect streams and help stabilize banks. When a buffer is stripped from a stream, it leaves the stream vulnerable to degradation.

Stream buffers have multiple functions. They filter and help purify the water entering creeks from both the land and other water pathways. Trees provide shade, keeping creeks cooler and reducing algae growth. Native plants have roots to slow soil erosion along stream banks. An easy way to establish a streamside buffer is to create a "No Mow" zone along the stream edge (15'-25' wide) to encourage native plant growth and soil stabilization.

Unhealthy Buffer   Healthy, Diverse Buffer

Another way to stabilize banks is to place rocks, broken pieces of concrete or other materials, known as rip rap, along the banks. The City of Gahanna has a program in place to assist homeowners in repairing stream bank erosion on private property by providing rip rap for placement on eroded banks by the property owner.

Although fallen leaves and branches from natural vegetation are part of the aquatic food chain, adding yard waste (grass clippings, raked leaves, cut limbs, etc.) to streams does more harm than good. It depletes oxygen in the stream as it decays, thus reducing oxygen for aquatic life. Yard waste build-up can decrease stream capacity and lead to flooding downstream. Chemicals from yard waste, such as fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide are a major cause of non-point source pollution.

Yard waste should never be disposed of in storm drains as it will ultimately end up in a waterway. Yard waste should be bagged in biodegradable (paper) bags or placed in a marked container and set curbside by 6 a.m. Mondays for collection by Rumpke. Grass clippings can also be raked back onto the lawn and mulched with a lawn mower.

For more information, contact the City of Gahanna Service Department at 614-342-4005.

Reminders:

The remittance address for utility bills is now:
City of Gahanna
PO Box 183202
Columbus, OH 43218-3202

When paying your water bill through your bank's online bill pay service, please include **all 8 digits of your account number**. Errors will cause a delay in payment processing.

Mosquito Season is here. The City of Gahanna has contracted with Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) for mosquito control. Call the FCPH Mosquito Bite Line at **614-525-BITE (2483)** to submit a request for service or to report mosquito problems or concerns. The Bite Line is a voicemail system, so please leave a detailed message.

The **2015 Fall Gateway Program Guide** is filled with valuable program and event information from the Gahanna Department of Parks & Recreation. Find your copy beginning in mid-August at businesses, restaurants and offices around Gahanna, including the Ohio Herb Education Center, Gahanna City Hall and the Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau office, or visit the Parks & Recreation page at www.gahanna.gov and click on 'Programs & Registration'.